



## Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

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### FOSTERING TEAMWORK FOR SUCCESSFUL INDOOR AIR QUALITY (IAQ) MANAGEMENT: COMING TOGETHER TO CREATE HEALTHY INDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

*"Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) doesn't mandate participation on campus-level IAQ Tools for Schools Teams; anyone can play a part. Once teams are formed, BCPS trains members on IAQ fundamentals. Combining training with a volunteer's sense of initiative, leadership and commitment transforms "team members" into bona fide IAQ champions."*

- David Glassman, Environmental Services, Baltimore City Public Schools



Developing and sustaining a **comprehensive IAQ management program** is much easier when the entire school community is involved in the program's intent, activities, results and next steps. To create and maintain a healthy school environment, build an

**inclusive and transparent** IAQ team

that represents your district and community. **Engaging all members** of the school community — including teachers, facilities and maintenance staff, students, administrators, nurses, and others — as participants and supporters is a first step in setting IAQ goals and using teamwork to achieve them. This leadership team can assist the **IAQ coordinator**, and engage senior management to support your IAQ management efforts.

#### Test Your IAQ Management Knowledge...

**1. You recently received mold test results from a moisture incident in your gymnasium. How should you communicate this information?**

**A.** Send an informative email to all school staff and parents, notifying them of the situation and the course of action the school will be taking to address the moisture intrusion.

**B.** What results?

**C.** Request some time on an upcoming PTA meeting agenda to share the test results and next steps the school will be taking to fix the problem and maintain a healthy indoor environment for the students and staff.

**D.** A and C: Communicating using multiple outlets is a good practice. It shows transparency and allows for all those interested to be involved in the solution of comprehensive IAQ management.

Find answers to these and other questions on the Schools IAQ Connector Email Discussion List!

Each member of the IAQ team can make a positive impact in creating healthy indoor environments in schools. The following action items are simple steps that team members can take to improve the effectiveness on the IAQ management team.

### Action Steps:

- **Administrators:** School officials and administrators interact with all members of the school community, including building staff, administrative staff, teachers, students, parents, local government officials and many others. This puts them in an ideal position to be leaders on IAQ management teams. **Administrators** can actively communicate their school's IAQ policies to other school stakeholders in order to demonstrate the impact that IAQ has on academic achievement. Additionally, administrators can proactively protect IAQ by ensuring it is a priority during facility retrofits and upgrades.
- **Facility and Maintenance Staff:** EPA has developed many *IAQ Tools for Schools* resources to help **facilities and maintenance staff locate and fix** IAQ issues, and communicate results to administrators. These resources include checklists in the **Action Kit**, which can be used to conduct a school walkthrough and assist with performing routine maintenance tasks in school buildings.
- **Parents and Community Leaders:** As IAQ team members, **parents** and community leaders can play an integral role by being aware of the issues that affect student performance, and by taking stock of the state of their child's classroom. Additionally, parents and other leaders can grow community partnerships to strengthen support for comprehensive IAQ in their districts' schools.
- **School Nurses:** **Schools nurses** are in the unique position to track potential IAQ-related health issues and communicate possible trends back to the IAQ team. They can also make sure the school's IAQ management plan includes an **asthma management** component by monitoring rates of rescue inhaler usage among students and educating students and staff about eliminating environmental asthma triggers.
- **Students:** A key way to make **students** stewards of a healthy indoor environment is to integrate them into the school's IAQ management program. This can be done by educating them on the importance of IAQ and encouraging them to participate in IAQ management efforts by reporting potential IAQ concerns and solutions to their teachers.
- **Teachers:** **Teachers** are often the first to recognize IAQ issues, making them fundamental players in school IAQ management. Teachers can communicate with facilities and maintenance staff to identify and address IAQ problems in their classrooms and school buildings. They can also be leaders in maintaining clean and clutter free spaces.

Join today by sending a blank email message to [schools\\_iaq\\_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov](mailto:schools_iaq_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov). Then check your email inbox for confirmation and membership details.

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Congratulations to the 2013 ENERGY STAR Partners of the Year! Check out the list of winners [here](#).

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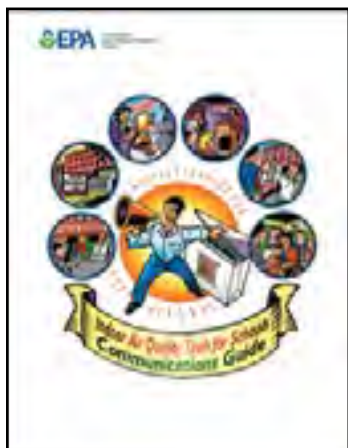
### The Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools Honorees have been announced!

Congratulations to the sixty-four Green Ribbon Schools (GRS) Honorees that are leading the nation in their efforts to reduce their environmental impact, promote healthy learning environments, and provide effective environmental education.

### EPA extends special congratulations to the eight 2013 GRS Honorees whose districts are also previous *IAQ Tools for Schools* Winners!

- King Science and Technology, Omaha Public Schools (Omaha, NE)
- Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary Hooker, Hartford Public Schools (Hartford, CT)
- Kent School District (Kent, WA) (*Note: KSD is a district GRS Honoree*)
- Cedar Grove Elementary School and Summit Hall Elementary; Montgomery County Public Schools (Rockville, MD) (*Note: MCPS is also a district GRS Honoree*)
- Hometown Elementary School, Putnam County Schools (Winfield, WV)
- Albert M. Greenfield Elementary School, The School District of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)
- The School District of Palm Beach County (West Palms Beach, FL) (*Note: PBCS is a district GRS Honoree*)

## HOW DOES YOUR IAQ TEAM COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY?



Once your team is organized and ready to work, the next step is to **communicate** with everyone, all the time. Share your IAQ program's intent and achievement with school stakeholders to build understanding and buy-in. Highlighting and sharing your successes and results can help make IAQ meaningful for your school.

To learn more about how you can improve both your internal and external communications and increase the effectiveness of your teamwork, check out EPA's *IAQ Tools for Schools Communications Guide*, document number 402-K-02-008.

This free guide can be shipped to you at no-charge. To order copies of the Communications Guide, visit [www.epa.gov/nscep](http://www.epa.gov/nscep) or order by phone 1-800-490-9198 (M-F 0900-1730 ET). Please use the EPA document number when ordering from NSCEP.

### Access Previous Connector E-Newsletters Online

Can't find a previous *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter in your inbox? No problem! Visit the [e-newsletter archive](#) on the *IAQ Tools for Schools* website to access printable versions (PDFs) of all past editions.

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## NEWS AND EVENTS

- **CEFPI Announces School of the Future Design Winners!** The winners of the 2013 contest are: Award of Excellence: Eastview Middle School, Red Deer, Alberta Canada; Award of Distinction: Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School, Blackburn, United Kingdom; and Award of Merit: Oakwood Junior High, Dayton, Ohio. [Click here](#) to read the full press release.
- **Save the Date: The next *IAQ Tools for Schools* webinar** will be held in conjunction with CEFPI on May 21, 2013, from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. EDT. Creating Exceptional Learning Environments through Comprehensive Indoor Air Quality Management will be presented by Dave Hill of Blue Valley School District.
- **National Association of Schools Nurses Annual Conference.** This conference will be held June 27 - 30, 2013, in Orlando, Florida. Learn more about the NASN conference!
- **In Case You Missed It!** April 1 - 7, 2013, was National Public Health Week. Check out event highlights, including information on how to provide a safe environment for children at school.
- **ALA's 2013 Asthma-Friendly Schools Initiative (AFSI) Champion Awards.** Is your school taking steps to become asthma-friendly? Get recognized for all your hard work! AFSI Champion Awards are part of a national recognition program that offers two types of awards based on the scope of your school's asthma management program. Learn more about a comprehensive approach to asthma management with the [Asthma-Friendly Schools Initiative](#). Application deadline for the 2013 AFSI Champion Awards is June 15, 2013.
- **May is Asthma Awareness Month** Check out [EPA's resources on managing asthma](#) in the school environment and learn what you can do to create healthy indoor environments for all school occupants.
- **Sensible Steps to Healthier School Environments Webinar Series.** Learn how to identify and take simple, affordable steps to protect the health of students and staff in schools in this [eight-part webinar series](#).

## NEW ONLINE RESOURCES!

### Watch the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Instructional Videos on YouTube.

EPA would like to express our sincere thanks to the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) for posting these videos on their YouTube channel. These [instructional videos](#) show how to implement the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Action Kit, how to operate and maintain school ventilation systems effectively, and how to conduct a school walkthrough. Consider using these videos for your local trainings. Make sure you have an Internet connection and access to YouTube.

- “Taking Action.”
- “Ventilation Basics.”
- “Walkthrough: Four Schools Making a Difference.”



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## LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS!

*IAQ Tools for Schools* Champions have successfully maintained an IAQ management program in their school or district using teamwork, and the other best practices outlined above. You are encouraged to [reach out to Champions](#) in your area and learn from their experiences to create and sustain your own IAQ management program.



## GET ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter? Do you have suggestions for a webinar or e-newsletter feature, or do you have questions about a specific IAQ topic? If so, send us an email at [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

**Share YOUR news and events!** Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Connector e-newsletter. Email your news and events to [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

The *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance is a comprehensive resource designed to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools>.